



The Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council, Executive Council of Australian Jewry, Zionist Federation of Australia, Jewish Community Council of Victoria and Zionism Victoria condemn the Melbourne University Student Union motion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is disingenuous to suggest that this motion is simply about criticism of the Israeli government or support for the Palestinians. It effectively advocates the eradication of Israel as a state and thus denies the basic right of national self-determination of the Jewish people. The motion is imbued with racism and its language drips with venomous hatred.

When student representatives falsely deny the Jewish connection to Israel, they deny to Jewish students the right to their own identity. When they promote hatred of Israel so unrelentingly, they are telling Jewish students and faculty that they don't belong on campus unless they willingly forego their own identity. Only one country is singled out. Only one ethnicity is vilified. This has real-world implications. Jewish students are facing increasing intimidation, including death threats, and a planned stabbing.

We strongly endorse the statement of the Australasian Union of Jewish Students highlighting the falsehoods and distortions on which the motion is premised. Jewish students have every reason to be outraged and fed up with the University of Melbourne Student Union for its obsessive singling out of Israel and the Jewish people for vilification and abuse. They are entitled to look to the university administration to enforce the university's professed standards against discriminatory and vilificatory conduct against any group.

The motion is openly intended to cast the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the starkest of black and white terms, where anything but hatred for Israel isn't tolerated.

It is shocking to see such a worldview so openly displayed at one of the world's best universities, a place where the drive to understand complexity is supposed to be celebrated. Yet what we see here is willful ignorance and risible over-simplification of one of the world's most tragic and complex human conflicts. The motion says nothing about the successive failures of a violent and corrupt Palestinian leadership in rejecting internationally-brokered offers made by Israel to establish a viable Palestinian state and makes blatant falsifications about the history of the conflict and the motivations of the parties to it.

Motions like this do nothing for Palestinians, but they make life on campus more dangerous for Jews.

We reject the lies in this motion. We reject the denial of Jewish connection to Israel, and we stand by Jewish students who face constant antisemitism and unrelenting hatred on campus because of who they are, and their family, ethnic, cultural and religious connections to Israel.

For further comments:

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